

Executive Update

Milwaukee County Executive Scott Walker's Weekly Newsletter

August 31, 2007

Message from County Executive Walker

I vetoed the County Board's resolution requesting an advisory referendum for a 1% sales tax increase for the following reasons:

First, a \$120 million 1% sales tax increase will give Milwaukee County the highest sales tax in the region and in the state (creating a "tax island" as Racine and Waukesha do not even have a county sales tax). Business and jobs will go out of the county.

Second, a \$120 million 1% sales tax increase will not guarantee property tax relief. In 1991, the members of the County Board voted to create a .5% sales tax with the promise of property tax relief. From 1992 to 2002, the tax levy went up 55%.

Third, a \$120 million 1% sales tax will not remove the fact that the county is burdened with huge retirement and healthcare costs. The increase in the cost of the contribution to the pension system from what was budgeted in 2002 to 2007 is more than enough to cover the tax levy contribution to transit and parks. More revenue will not go directly to transit or parks while retirement and healthcare costs eat up so much of the budget.

And fourth, a vote on a \$120 million 1% sales tax increase will not guarantee action from the state government. In the spring of 2005, voters in 69 of the 72 counties overwhelmingly approved advisory referendum questions on removing the state mandates on the county governments for courts and health and human services.

Instead of acting on these recommendations, the Governor and Legislature now have budgets that increase the costs of these mandates.

Scott



Walker vetoes sales tax resolution



County Executive Walker is joined by Mike Ruzicka and Marne Stück of the Greater Milwaukee Association of Realtors, Bob Collison of the Independent Business Association, and Steve Baas of the Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce at a major retailer on the county line to highlight the significance of higher taxes affecting businesses in Milwaukee County.

Jewish Home & Care Center Event



Walker mingles with members and staff of the Jewish Home & Care Center before presenting a proclamation in honor of their extensive renovations and new assisted nursing facility

Park Events Highlighted



County Executive Walker joined Gus Gnorski on Fox6 TV with Sue Black and her dog Ranger to promote the last weekend for Cool Waters swimming and the popular Doggie Dip taking place Monday, September 3 from 6pm – 8pm after the pool closes for the season. The parks department partners with Residents for Off-leash Milwaukee Parks (ROMP) on the Doggie Dip. Admission is \$5 per dog. Visit milwaukeekeeparks.org for more information. The Miller Room and Coast Restaurant, both at O'Donnell Park, were also featured on the program. Paul Raasch of Coast presented special menu items and Walker reminded viewers of the wonderful rental opportunities available for gatherings at Milwaukee County Park facilities. For more sites and reservation information, visit www.countyparks.com.

Support the Parks

Time is running out to support the Parks through the purchase of a \$5 raffle ticket for a chance to win a 2007 Harley-Davidson motorcycle. Tickets are available at all 40 US Bank locations in Milwaukee County, the parks golf courses and other locations noted at www.countyparks.com. Raffle donations go directly to improvements within the parks system. Winner will be named at the Party for the Parks on September 29.

Hispanic Professionals Annual Meeting



The Hispanic Professionals of Greater Milwaukee (HPGM) gathered at the Discovery World at Pier Wisconsin Pilot House for their annual meeting and heard remarks by County Executive Walker. The HPGM offers scholarships to Hispanic professionals for post-graduate degrees, networking events and leadership conferences for its members.

Events around town

County Executive Walker met again with leaders on the regional transit initiative, presented an overview of the current budget status to the Milwaukee Regional Medical Center's annual luncheon meeting, and joined Joel McNally and Cassandra on the 1290 WMCS Morning Magazine program to discuss budget and transit issues.



Jianlian receives "MilwaukYi" welcome

News of Yi Jianlian signing with the Milwaukee Bucks generated a flurry of excitement around town this week. County Executive Walker had issued a welcome letter to the basketball star when word of the draft became known in June. Walker joins the community in extending a hearty welcome to Yi Jianlian.